

The Impact of Term Limits on Feminist Policy in Ohio

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Abstract

The possible implications of term limits have been widely studied by political scientists. However, specific policy preferences have been left out of this research. I hypothesize that lawmakers first elected to the state legislature after the implementation of term limits in Ohio (newcomers) are more likely to propose anti-feminist bills than those legislators first elected to the state legislature before the implementation of term limits (old-timers). I investigate this problem by analyzing all bills proposed in the 124th General Assembly of Ohio. I test the hypothesis that newcomers and old-timers propose different kinds of bills when it comes to feminist and anti-feminist policy. I use logistic regression and linear regression to analyze the relationship between sponsorship and co-sponsorship of feminist or anti-feminist bills with the legislators' newcomer or old-timer status, while controlling for party, sex, total number of bills sponsored (or co-sponsored), and district type. I find that a significant relationship exists between sponsorship and co-sponsorship of anti-feminist bills and newcomer status. In other words, newcomers are more likely than old-timers to sponsor and co-sponsor anti-feminist legislation when other variables are controlled. I conclude that term limits in Ohio have allowed for the election of legislators who are more hostile to feminist issues.

Term limits have long been debated as a policy issue in the United States, but it has come to the forefront in the last few decades. The debate “seemed to sweep across the country” like a “summer storm” (Peery and Little, 2003, p. 106). Political scientists, concerned citizens, and politicians themselves have argued over the impact of limiting the terms of legislators, and whether this should be considered “good” policy. Some argue that term limits open the door for women and minorities to run for office. Other proponents argue that term limits bring in people with fresh ideas and help to prevent stalemate in the legislature, or prevent certain legislators from gaining so much power that the legislature becomes undemocratic.

Others claim that term limits have not significantly changed the demographic composition of legislatures. They do argue, however, that term limits could (and some say do) change legislative behaviors and priorities, especially with regards to constituent service and representation. Opponents have also pointed out that limiting terms in the legislature increases the influence and power of the executive branch (namely governors and career bureaucrats) as well as increasing the influence of career lobbyists over inexperienced legislators. Still other opponents claim that the effects of term limits are null because term limited legislators will simply rotate in and out of the other two branches of government; hence term limits do not prevent the phenomenon of the “career politician.”

One topic that has not been discussed as much is the possible impact of term limits on specific policy issues. Researchers have described changes in numbers of bills term-limited legislators might propose, but not how the types of bills legislators propose might change. This is an interesting gap in the debate. After all, one of the most important duties of legislators is to create laws that are beneficial to their constituents. This gap becomes even

more glaring in the context of newspaper articles such as one in the *Cincinnati Enquirer* titled, “Term limits add urgency to next legislative class” written in October 2000, one month before Ohio’s first term-limited election. Tom Brinkman, a first-time candidate for the Ohio House, describes his anxiousness to become a politician so he can enact anti-abortion laws to “save 1,000 babies this year and 2,000 the next if that’s what I have to do” (qtd. in Jasper 2000). Knowing he only has eight years, his anti-feminist convictions will not take a back seat in his actions. “I’m going to be on the offensive, I’m not going to go slow. I’m going to do something other than warm a seat” (Brinkman qtd. in Jasper 2000). This begs the question, have term limits allowed a new breed of ultra-conservatives such as Brinkman into the Ohio General Assembly?

In 1992, Ohio joined several other states in adopting legislative term limits. Implemented in the year 2000, 50 new legislators entered the House (out of 99 total seats). This large turnover would, theoretically, create many changes in all aspects of the House. I focus on policy. I investigate whether term limits in the state of Ohio have increased or decreased feminist and anti-feminist policy proposals.

Due to the implementation of term limits, I hypothesize that legislators first elected to the state legislature after the implementation of term limits in Ohio (newcomers) propose proportionately fewer feminist bills and proportionately more anti-feminist bills than those legislators first elected to the state legislature before the implementation of term limits (old-timers). I will investigate this problem by analyzing all bills proposed in the 124th General Assembly of Ohio (the years 2001-2002). I will test the hypothesis that newcomers and old-timers propose different kinds of bills when it comes to feminist policy, controlling for party, gender, and district characteristics.

This research question is important because term limits are meant to increase legislators' responsiveness to constituents' needs. Voters and citizens need to know what their legislators' priorities are and what they are spending their time on. I focus on feminist issues. Do the bills reflect a feminist agenda? On the surface, term limits seem to be aligned with the feminist cause because they will theoretically open more seats in state legislatures and allow more women to run for office.

Now that term limits have been implemented in several states, research has shown that there is little effect on the gender composition of state legislatures. Although the membership of women in state legislatures has increased, researchers are "unable to attribute any part of this change to the extraordinary opening up of legislative seats that occurred as term limits took effect" (Carey et al., 2003, p. 8). The number of women legislators is not significantly different between term-limited states and non-term-limited states. However, scholars have not yet considered the possibility that term limits may have consequences for feminist policy.

I hypothesize that term limits may have opened the door for more conservative candidates to win election in Ohio.

Term Limits

One proposed effect of term limits is that they will allow a new "type" of legislator into office, a type of person previously prevented from entering office due to the strong advantage of incumbents at the polls. Proponents argue that term limits will create new opportunities for women and minorities to be better represented in public office, creating more descriptive representation. Opponents argue that term limits will not have this effect because other factors such as party, district makeup, and recruitment of candidates play too

large of a factor. The scholarly debate is not as simple, however. Becky Cain (1994) argues that term limits will actually reduce the number of potential candidates, rather than opening up the pool of candidates to new “types” of people. I propose that term limits have opened the door for more ideologically extreme legislators, and I use proposed feminist and anti-feminist legislation to test this effect.

Related to feminist policy is the increase in female legislators. Bernstein and Chadha (2003, p. 154) conduct a study to determine why term limits have not produced the increase in female legislators that was expected, and go so far as to suggest that term limits might actually be a handicap for women in general elections. To study term limits’ impact specifically on the representation of women, Sarbaugh-Thompson et al. (2004) analyze the percentage of women elected to the Michigan House and California Assembly from the year 1990 to the year 2002. Both states implemented term limits during the 1990’s. Their data show that the representation of women in Michigan decreased (from a high of 28.2% in 1996 to 21.8% in 2002), whereas the representation of women in California increased (from 18.8% in 1990 increasing to 31.3% in 2002). Sarbaugh-Thompson et al. (2004) conclude: “Do term limits increase the diversity of the state legislature? In California the answer was yes, in Michigan, maybe” (p. 82).

Another controversy surrounding term limits is the impact of term limits on legislative behavior. This argument is complex, with both opponents and proponents of term limits arguing that term limits will change legislators’ priorities, hence changing their actions. The argument is mainly over how their priorities and behaviors will change, and whether it is for the better or for the worse. Carey et al. (2003) and Sarbaugh-Thompson et al. (2004) argue that term limits cause legislators to feel less “ beholden ” to their constituents.

In “Term Limits in the State Legislatures: Results from a new survey of the 50 states”, John M. Carey et al. (2003) conduct a survey of legislators in all 50 states to measure the impact of term limits on types of people elected to office (demographics and ideology), the behaviors and priorities of legislators, and the balance of power among the institutions of state politics. They find the biggest impact to be on legislator priorities (legislators become less “beholden” to their constituents when faced with term limits).

In contrast to my hypothesis, Carey et al. (2003) find that term limits do not affect legislator ideology. However, this finding differs from my hypothesis in that I focus specifically on feminist and anti-feminist policy. Also, I analyze bills for their feminist or anti-feminist content rather than surveying legislators on their overall ideological position. Although Carey et al. (2003) control for the fact that term limits may impact states differently, I focus on Ohio, which may differ from national trends.

Sarbaugh-Thompson et al. (2004) analyze the impact of term limits on legislative behavior in their book, *The Political and Institutional Effects of Term Limits*. They specifically look at “whether the responsiveness of legislators to their constituents is increased or decreased after limits are imposed” (p. 97). They study this by surveying members of the Michigan House of Representatives in 1997-1998 (before implementation of term limits) and 1999-2000 and 2001-2002 (both after the implementation of term limits). Their data supports their hypothesis that “lame duck” legislators spend less time on constituent activities (p. 102). This could mean that legislators in their last term will spend more time on bills they are ideologically attached to as opposed to bills their constituents necessarily support.

Before term limits, legislators had to be team players, but after the implementation of term limits, legislators are in more of a hurry and do not have time to compromise. A predicted effect of term limits is that newcomers will propose more “courageous” legislation because they know their time is finite (Cain 1994, p. 28). I read courageous as meaning more extreme. These are legislators with less political experience, who follow political “fads” rather than the “boring” necessities of legislation such as roads, jobs, and safety (Gottlieb 2001). In other words, inexperienced legislators may focus on more hot-button issues such as reproductive rights.

The prisoners’ dilemma has been used to further emphasize this point. Term limits cause legislators to be less responsive to constituent needs and spend more time on their own agenda (Cohen and Spitzer 1996, p.57). In “Michigan: The End is Near” (2003), Penning points out that in Michigan, newcomers are no longer following the advice to “lie low” and “wait (their) turn” to make moves in the legislature. There is less collegiality among the legislators. Instead, they spend more time “pursuing their individual ‘missions’ or policy agendas” (p. 38).

The media has also been following the term limits debate. In Ohio, they have covered the statewide rightward trend that, according to the scholarly research, would be enhanced by the recent implementation of term limits. Term limits have opened the door to a

“new breed of conservative Republican candidates expected to win election in November. Unlike politicians who once spent their entire careers in the House, these freshmen-to-be are keenly aware the new voter-approved rules limit their terms to eight years. And with the clock ticking, many have little patience for those who believe avoiding controversy is the best way for Republicans to retain their majority and control over the legislative agenda” (Jasper 2000).

An article published in *Washington Monthly* describes the difference in legislators that are term-limited. Term-limited legislators have less time for upward mobility, and therefore they have to work quickly to “make their mark”. Because they know they are not up for re-election, these legislators are more ambitious to pursue their own personal agenda and less responsive to their constituents’ needs. The article also points out that new legislators owe their careers to the “establishment” that allowed them into the legislature rather than owing their career to their constituents (Wallison 2000).

Term limits may attract zealous candidates because they know they have to push their agenda quickly. Legislators are on a “fast track” to get their work done (Larkin 2002). The new legislators are “driven to achieve things now because they know they’re not going to be around for that long. This limits their ability to take time to compromise” (Leonard 1999). They do not have time to sit on controversial bills because they know they only have eight years.

Lee Leonard of *The Columbus Dispatch* observes that inexperienced legislators will focus on more hot-button, simple issues, such as reproductive rights: “These issues lend themselves to simplistic solutions. Because legislators are term-limited, these issues are right up their alley; they don't have time to deal with the complex issues, especially when the next election always seems to be right around the corner” (2004).

Methodology

Case of Ohio

My hypothesis states that due to the implementation of term limits in Ohio, more ideologically extreme legislators have gained seats in the Ohio General Assembly. I test this by examining bills proposed as a measure of legislators’ priorities. I look specifically at the

state of Ohio for several reasons. First, Ohio implemented term limits fairly recently (2000), and in that election year, nearly half of the House of Representatives were termed out, providing a good dataset to compare newcomers and old-timers. In fact, 50% of the legislators I use in this study¹ are considered newcomers.

Secondly, although the legislature has a Republican majority, it is not very strong in the House. 60.4% of the legislators in this study are Republicans, the remaining are Democrats. Again, this dataset provides an opportunity to control for party when examining the behavior of newcomers and old-timers. Ohio is also considered to be a moderate state, and is often a swing state in presidential elections. Although the number of partisan moderates in the legislature has shrunk (Hallett 2005), Ohioans in general are considered “raging moderates” by former Ohio Democratic Party Chairman Jim Ruvolo (qtd. in Jasper 2000).

Thirdly, the number of women in Ohio’s legislature is fairly representative of the national average. 25% of the legislators in this study are women. The national average is 22.6% of legislators (NCSL website).

Finally, Ohio has a relatively professional legislature. It is categorized as “Red Lite” by the National Conference of State Legislatures. Red legislatures are the most professional in the US; they are usually a full-time job and are compensated as such. Ohio legislators make \$56,260.62 per year, which is the sixth highest salary in the nation behind only California, Michigan, New York, Pennsylvania, and Illinois². Red legislatures also have

¹ Three House members are not part of the dataset due to their lack of bill proposals.

² <http://www.ncsl.org/programs/legman/about/05salary.htm>

larger staffs and districts. In 2003, the Ohio legislature had a total staff of 506. This is lower than the national average of 700³, hence Ohio's status as "Red Lite."

Using a more professional legislature is a good case selection because term limits are likely to have a greater effect in professional legislatures than less professional legislatures. This is because term limits allow inexperienced legislators into office, creating a disruption. Kousser (2005) concludes that term limits "have the power to turn back the clock on some of the nation's most professional bodies, bringing changes that narrow the broad gap between citizen legislatures and houses with long sessions, high salaries, and large staff" (p. 203). This means that term limits have the effect of deprofessionalizing legislatures, which has a greater impact on more professional bodies.

I use data from the 124th General Assembly of Ohio. As previously mentioned, this term saw a large turnover in members of the House. The Senate experienced turnover as well, but in a different way. Only two Ohio Senators of the 124th General Assembly can be identified as newcomers. These are Senators Robert Hagan and Tim Ryan—both males and both Democrats. Due to the scarcity of newcomers, I use only the House in my study.

The dataset for the House of Representatives of the 124th Ohio General Assembly includes significant variation in three demographic characteristics of interest (newcomer status, gender, and party). *Table 1* shows the cross-tabulation of party, newcomer status, and gender for the dataset. The results reveal that the largest demographic group is Republican newcomer men, the group I hypothesize will have the largest proportion of anti-feminist bills. Although I hypothesize that newcomer status will have a greater effect than gender on types of bills proposed, the women in the House are more evenly distributed among the parties and newcomer status.

³ <http://www.ncsl.org/programs/legman/about/staffcount2003.htm>

Table 1 Demographics of the Ohio 124th General Assembly House of Representatives

Variable	Percent
newcomers	49.48
old-timers	50.52
men	75.77
women	24.23
Republican	59.79
Democrat	40.21

I borrow from Carey et al. (2003) to define newcomers and old-timers. Newcomers are defined as legislators who were first elected into the state legislature after the implementation of term limits. Old-timers are defined as legislators who work as state representatives or state senators prior to the implementation of term limits in 2000. Therefore, legislators who are new to the House but were previous members of the Senate were identified as old-timers. Legislators who have previous legislative experience in a different level of government (such as a city council) were coded as newcomers. *Table 2* displays the demographic differences between newcomers and old-timers in the dataset. This table is included to show the similarities between the two groups of legislators. The ratios between newcomers and old-timers, which are all relatively close to 1, affirm that the characteristics between the two groups are comparable.

Table 2 Newcomers and Old-timers

	Newcomers	Old-timers	ratio of NC/OT
Republicans	27	31	0.871
Democrats	21	17	1.2353
Men	35	37	0.9459
Women	13	11	1.1818

NOTE: Only legislators included in the analysis are included in this table.

I use sponsorship of bills to represent legislative priorities and demonstrate their behavior. Legislators do not introduce bills simply because they want that law enacted.

There are several reasons a legislator might sponsor a bill, including demonstration of expertise on an issue, drawing attention to an issue, demonstrating to their constituents that they are working in their best interests, or appealing to certain groups of voters (Swers 2002, p. 33-34). For these reasons, legislators sometimes introduce bills they know will never pass into law (Swers 2002, p. 33). Bill sponsorship of feminist (or in my study, anti-feminist) bills demonstrate the level of commitment a legislator has to the feminist (or anti-feminist) cause. Swers (2002) explains that “an analysis of bill sponsorship is therefore a good first step toward determining which members are working to bring women’s issues to the...agenda” (p. 34).

Coding of variables

I use Bratton’s (2002) method of coding bill introductions for new laws, excluding resolutions and memorials. I model my study after Bratton because legislators’ behavior can be “measured as the sponsorship of group interest legislation” (p. 124). If a legislator introduces anti-feminist bills, it can be concluded that anti-feminist issues are a priority for that legislator. Taking this a step further, the greater proportion of introduced bills by a legislator that are anti-feminist, the greater a priority this issue is on his or her agenda.

Legislators that co-sponsor bills are coded as such. Scholars have found that co-sponsorship of bills “may be used as an instrument of ‘position taking’” (Campbell 1982, 416). One of the goals of co-sponsorship activity is pursuing what they consider to be good policy. My hypothesis is consistent with scholarship on co-sponsorship. Campbell (1982) hypothesizes that more extreme ideological legislators will co-sponsor more bills than moderate legislators. Kessler and Krehbiel (1996) find this same effect. In other words, if a legislator co-sponsors a bill that is feminist, she is taking a stance on a feminist issue. If a

legislator co-sponsors a significant proportion of feminist bills, she is taking a stronger stance on the issue, signaling that feminist policy is an important part of her legislative agenda.

All bills introduced into the 124th Ohio General Assembly fall into one of four categories: feminist, anti-feminist, pornography, or other. The definition of feminist bills is taken from Swers (2002), Bratton (2002), and the National Organization for Women website⁴. Feminist bills include policies that are “particularly salient to women because they seek to achieve equality for women; they address women's special needs, such as women's health concerns or child care issues” (Swers 2002, p. 34).

My definition differs from Swers in that I do not include education or bills that protect or improve the lives of children. The only education bills coded as feminist are bills that specifically target a program for girls or women, or provide funding for comprehensive sex education programs (also known as condom-based programs—which NOW advocates as essential to reproductive freedom).

I will follow more closely Bratton’s (2002) method of defining bills in an “explicitly feminist fashion” by including bills that decrease gender discrimination, alleviate the effects of gender discrimination, or improve the socio-economic status of women (p. 123).

Examples of issues included are taken from Carroll (2001). Feminist bills improve women’s rights, alleviate or prevent domestic violence, enhance or ensure reproductive rights for women and teens, protect the rights of pregnant women, increase opportunities for parental leave, increase or ensure affirmative action, enforce or increase child support payments, improve the lives of or ensure the rights of women in jail, broaden or enforce gay rights, increase penalties for, alleviate the effects of, or prevent sexual violence, provide programs for displaced homemakers, increase funding for research or programs targeting women’s

⁴ <http://www.now.org/issues/>

health, or increase funding for childbirth in public hospitals. NOW suggests that bills that bring women with disabilities into full participation in society, restrict availability of risky silicone filled breast implants, ensure choice of medical procedures specifically affecting women (such as the breast cancer procedures mastectomies or lumpectomies), and protect the right of mothers to breast feed should also be considered feminist⁵.

An example of a feminist bill from the dataset I use is House Bill 103. The abstract for HB 103 states:

“To enact sections 111.31 to 111.40 of the Revised Code to require the Secretary of State to establish, develop, and maintain a registry of women and minorities available to serve on corporate boards of directors; to specify the information that may be maintained in the registry; to provide for the publication of a directory of eligible women and minorities; and to provide for access to registry information, fees, and administrative reporting requirements.”

This bill is consistent with a feminist platform because its intention is to increase opportunities for women and minorities to serve on corporate boards of directors.

Feminist bills are further coded into the subcategories of sex crimes and all other feminist bills. I separate feminist bills into two categories of sex crime bills and all other bills because of the varied interests that may sponsor or co-sponsor this type of legislation. For example, conservatives may introduce this kind of bill because of their stance on crime-fighting, not necessarily because they are concerned with feminist issues. Although I think it is important to include sex crimes in the feminist bill category due to the prevalence of the violence against women issue for feminists, I also want to separate these bills from other bills to control for the possibility that legislators otherwise hostile to feminist issues may be likely to introduce sex crime bills. House Bill 642 is representative of many of the bills that fall into this subcategory. Its abstract states:

⁵ <http://www.now.org/issues/>

“To amend sections 2905.01, 2907.02, and 2971.03 of the Revised Code to impose a mandatory prison term for kidnapping with a sexual motivation specification and a sexually violent predator specification and for rape with a sexually violent predator specification.”

All feminist bills excluding sex crimes are further subcategorized into bills meant to increase reproductive rights and all other feminist, non-sex crime bills. Feminist bills could conceivably be subcategorized into several topics, but reproductive rights are central to the feminist agenda, and usually include the “hot-button” issues that I hypothesize newcomers will focus on. Reproductive rights legislation attracts a greater amount of media attention, and I want to test if legislators are focusing on these issues as much as the media would have us believe.

The definition of anti-feminist bills is taken from the Concerned Women for America⁶ and the Eagle Forum⁷. The bills I will code as anti-feminist protect gender roles and the traditional family structure of one man and one woman⁸. House Bill 234 provides an example of an anti-feminist bill introduced into Ohio’s 126th General Assembly. The abstract of HB 234 clearly states its intention.

“To amend section 3101.01 of the Revised Code to specifically declare that same-sex marriages are against the strong public policy of the state, to declare that the recognition or extension of the specific statutory benefits of legal marriage to non-marital relationships is against the public policy of the state, and to make other declarations regarding same-sex marriages.”

Anti-feminist bills include one subcategory, for bills that are meant to limit reproductive rights. This includes withdrawing RU-486 (otherwise known as the abortion pill), prohibiting minors from obtaining legal abortions without parental consent, denying

⁶ <http://www.cwa-union.org/issues/>

⁷ <http://www.eagleforum.org/>

⁸ Which is what CWA refers to as the “Biblical design of the family” (<http://www.cwfa.org/coreissues.asp>).

funding to abortion clinics, requiring abortion clinics to provide adoption information or “unborn child pain awareness” information⁹, banning or restricting the distribution of the Morning-After Pill (also known as MAP, Preven, or Plan B) in schools or elsewhere, or allowing healthcare workers, pharmacists, or entire healthcare institutions to restrict women’s choices by refusing to provide contraceptive or abortion services.

Because sex education is a crucial element of reproductive rights, this subcategory also includes bills that restrict or prohibit the funding for or the distribution of any forms of contraception in public schools. The only other education-related bills I will code as anti-feminist are bills that “establish parity in funding between comprehensive sex education and abstinence-only education”¹⁰, or in any way restrict or prohibit comprehensive sex education programs in public schools. Bills that attempt to undermine reproductive rights by defining unborn fetuses as persons through bills similar to the Unborn Victims of Violence Act are coded under the subcategory of anti-feminist bills limiting reproductive rights. Bills that protect the lives of unborn fetuses or make violence specifically against them a crime at the expense of reproductive rights will be coded as such. This is not to be confused with bills specifically protecting pregnant women against violence, which are coded as feminist. The priority of the bill (whether it aims to protect the woman or the fetus) will determine its coding as feminist or antifeminist.

Bills coded as pornography or other do not have subcategories. Pornography has a separate category because feminists’ stances on this issue vary, yet most agree that it is an

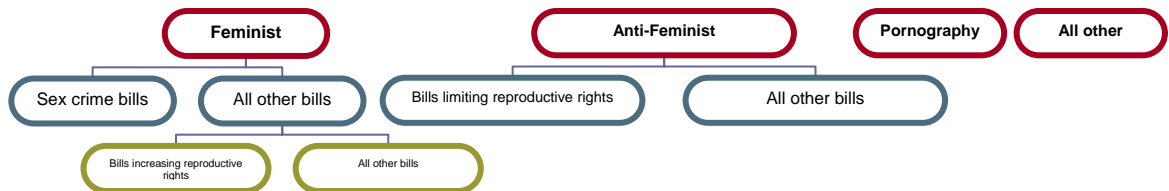
⁹ This legislation is meant to “ensure that mothers are made aware that their child feels pain during the abortion procedure performed at least 20 weeks after conception”

(<http://www.cwfa.org/articledisplay.asp?id=7241&department=CWA&categoryid=misc>).

¹⁰ <http://www.cwfa.org/articledisplay.asp?id=7241&department=CWA&categoryid=misc>

issue relevant to women. Therefore I include it in my analysis. *Figure 1* is a representation of the categories and subcategories of the bill coding scheme.

Figure 1 Coding scheme of bills



As *Figure 1* shows, feminist bills can be coded as more than one subtype. For example, the summary of House Bill 432 is as follows:

“To enact sections 1751.661, 3923.601, and 3923.611 of the Revised Code to require certain sickness and accident insurance policies, public employee benefit plans, and health insuring corporation policies, contracts, and agreements to provide coverage for prescription contraceptive drugs and devices and any outpatient services directly related to such drugs or devices.”

This bill is meant to increase reproductive rights, and is coded as 1 for feminist, enhancing reproductive rights, and feminist excluding sex crimes. HB 432 is coded as 0 for antifeminist, and hence is coded as 0 for all subcategories of anti-feminist bills.

Table 3 shows the frequency of each kind of bill sponsored or co-sponsored in the Ohio General Assembly House of Representatives for the 124th session. The relatively low frequencies of the bills of interest can be observed from this table. It is also important to point out the much greater participation at the co-sponsorship level than at the sponsorship level. For example, 97% of all House members added their name as a co-sponsor to at least one piece of feminist legislation. However, it must be taken into consideration the high

percentage of co-sponsors for sex crimes, which is included as feminist. Over half of the feminist bills are sex crime bills (N=26).

Table 3 Types of Bills sponsored and co-sponsored

Bill type	N	% of total bills	% legislators who sponsored	% legislators who co-sponsored
feminist	48	4.84	27	97
increasing reproductive rights	7	0.71	5	38
sex crimes	26	2.62	15	91
feminist excluding sex crimes	22	2.36	13	90
anti-feminist	7	0.71	7	64
limiting reproductive rights	5	0.50	5	53
pornography	4	0.40	2	65
all other	933	94.05		
total	992	100		

NOTE: % of total bills is 100(N/992). % of legislators is the % of House members in the 124th Ohio General Assembly who sponsored or co-sponsored at least one bill in the specified category.

To rule out the possibility that sponsorship and co-sponsorship of feminist or anti-feminist legislation may be more related to district type than newcomer or old-timer status, I control for district data for each legislator. I follow Swers' method of accounting for district characteristics because "the needs of the district rank foremost in the minds of all representatives" (2002, p. 47). It is necessary to control for the possibility that district characteristics may better explain legislative behavior than newcomer status.

The variables I include are the mean income of the legislator's district, mean education level of the legislator's district, percentage of African-Americans in the legislator's district, and whether the district is urban or rural. Previous research has shown that districts that are more urban, have higher income and education levels, and a greater percentage of African-Americans are more liberal (and would be expected to sponsor and co-sponsor more feminist legislation) than districts that are more rural, have lower income and education

levels, and a smaller percentage of African-Americans (which would be expected to sponsor and co-sponsor more anti-feminist bills) (Swers 2002). Therefore it is necessary to control for these factors if newcomers are more likely to come from districts that are expected to be liberal or conservative. *Table 4* shows the difference of means of the district data for newcomers and old-timers. None of the differences in means across the two samples is statistically significant.

Table 4 Difference of Means of District type data

	Newcomers	Old-timers
Average income	\$48,627.56 (11180.812)	\$46,305.15 (13841.072)
% College educated	35.84 (11.850)	32.89 (9.716)
% African American	12.92 (19.537)	11.87 (19.380)
% Urban districts	32 (0.471)	21 (0.414)
% Rural districts	22 (0.418)	32 (0.471)

NOTE: Data are taken from *The Almanac of State Legislatures* (Lilley, DeFranco, and Bernstein, 1998). Numbers in parenthesis are standard deviations. $p > 0.1$ for all comparisons of means.

I also include control variables for party and gender. A correlation between gender and sponsorship of women's interest bills has been found in previous research (Swers 2002, p. 40). Because women are more likely to sponsor feminist bills than men, I include the gender variable to further isolate the newcomer/old-timer variable. Swers also finds a significant relationship between majority party status and sponsorship of feminist bills (2002, p. 38). It is also possible that a legislator's co-sponsorship of a bill may be more related to party loyalty than their own ideology. Therefore I include the party variable to control for this.

Finally, I include total bills sponsored (or co-sponsored) as an independent variable. Some legislators were much more active with regards to sponsorship of bills than others. *Table 5* reveals this range. Representative John Willamowski (Republican, old-timer) sponsored 29 bills, whereas several representatives only sponsored one bill¹¹. The range of co-sponsorship activity is even greater, with Representative Bill Seitz (Republican, newcomer) signing onto 322 bills and other legislators signing onto as little as 13 or 21 bills. I include this variable because, as Swers explains, “a variable measuring the total number of bills each member sponsored accounts for the fact that those who sponsor more bills are mathematically more likely to sponsor a women’s issue bill” (2002, p. 48).

Table 5 Total bills sponsored and co-sponsored by each legislator

	Sponsorship	Co-sponsorship
Maximum N bills	29	322
Minimum N bills	1	13
Mean N bills	6.948 (5.108)	135.866 (61.680)

NOTE: Numbers in parentheses are standard deviations.

It has also been found that newcomer or freshmen legislators are likely to introduce fewer bills than old-timer or veteran legislators, and this is also the case for my analysis. A Pearson correlation between newcomer and old-timer status and total number of bills introduced reveals a positive correlation at the $p \leq 0.05$ level, with old-timers more likely to introduce bills. However, this correlation disappears for co-sponsorship. Because newcomer/old-timer status is of great importance to my analysis, I find it important to include the total bills introduced (or total bills co-sponsored) as an independent variable to control for the possibility that newcomers may introduce fewer feminist bills because, due to their inexperience, they introduce fewer bills overall.

¹¹ House Speaker Householder (Republican, old-timer) did not sponsor any bills, and was left out of the analysis.

Analysis methods

I conduct two tests of my hypothesis because I hypothesize that newcomers are more likely to sponsor any anti-feminist bills and anti-feminist bills are a larger share of their total proposed bills. I use both logistic regression and linear regression to test my hypothesis¹². For both methods, I create seven models for the different dependent variables (one for each bill type: feminist, anti-feminist, enhancing reproductive rights, limiting reproductive rights, sex crimes, pornography, and feminist excluding sex crimes). In logistic regression the dependent variables are dichotomous; in this case, the dependent variable is whether or not the legislator (the unit of analysis) sponsored or co-sponsored one or more bills of each bill type. In the linear regression analysis, the dependent variables are continuous from 0 to 1. The dependent variable is the proportion of each bill type the legislator co-sponsored out of the total bills the legislator co-sponsored.

I use both regression methods as opposed to just one because my hypothesis could consist of two scenarios. One scenario is that there is a significant difference between newcomers and old-timers that exists among a large set of legislators whose agenda includes feminist or anti-feminist issues (therefore they sponsor or co-sponsor one or more of these bills). The second scenario my hypothesis allows for is that a significant difference exists among a set of legislators whose agenda is outweighed by feminist or anti-feminist issues (therefore they sponsor or co-sponsor a high proportion of these bills).

Using a dichotomous measure is especially appropriate for the bill sponsorship data because of the low frequency of legislators who sponsored any bills that fall into the feminist, anti-feminist, or pornography categories. Although 27% of legislators introduced feminist bills (see *Table 5*), only 5% introduced at least one bill subcategorized as increasing

¹² Analyses were conducted with SPSS version 13.0.

reproductive rights. Of the legislators that did sponsor a bill in my coding scheme, most of them sponsored only one or two. Because of the lack of variation to explain, I use a dichotomous measure of bill sponsorship. Therefore I use only logistic regression models to analyze the sponsorship of bills.

However, I use both logistic regression and linear regression to analyze the co-sponsorship of all bill types. Rates of co-sponsorship (nearly 136 bills on average) are much higher for legislators than those of sponsorship (refer to *Table 5*). As I previously discussed, co-sponsorship demonstrates less of a commitment to an issue than does sponsorship. However, it is still important to see if differences exist in issue positions between newcomers and old-timers. The greater frequency of bill co-sponsorship means that a proportion of total bills co-sponsored can be used to determine the legislators' degree of feminist or anti-feminist ideologies.

In these analyses, there are nine independent variables. The dichotomous variables are coded with a 0 or 1. These include newcomer status (newcomers = 1, old-timers = 0), party (Republicans = 1, Democrats = 0), sex (male = 1, female = 0), urban district (urban = 1, not urban = 0)¹³, and rural district (rural = 1, not rural = 0).

The remaining variables are continuous. These include the total bills sponsored or co-sponsored (for logistic regression only), the district income (average annual income of legislator's district, in dollars), district education level (percentage of legislator's district's residents who are college educated), and % African-Americans in district (percentage of legislator's district's residents who are African-American).

¹³ Taken from *The Almanac of State Legislatures* (Lilley, DeFranco, and Bernstein, 1998).

Findings

Table 6 shows the β value and standard errors for each variable in the logistic regression models for sponsorship of bills. Not surprisingly, total number of bills proposed by legislators is significant for almost all types of bills. This means that in most cases, the amount of overall legislative activity predicts existence of legislative activity on feminist and anti-feminist bill sponsorship and co-sponsorship. The interesting exceptions to this are the co-sponsorships of total anti-feminist bills and bills limiting reproductive rights.

Table 6 Logits on Sponsorship of Bills

Variable	Feminist	Sex crimes	Feminist excluding sex crimes	Increasing reproductive rights	Anti-feminist	Limiting reproductive rights
Newcomer	-.545 (.559)	-.419 (.722)	.025 (.766)	2.428 (1.638)	4.118** (1.959)	3.747* (1.933)
Republican	-.606 (.716)	-.326 (.920)	-2.169** (1.105)	-4.987* (2.603)	-1.787 (1.635)	-2.737 (1.833)
Male	-1.685*** (.652)	.166 (.925)	-3.273*** (1.091)	-6.111* (3.350)	-2.277 (1.519)	-2.843 (2.049)
Total bills sponsored	.128** (.053)	.128** (.061)	.154* (.082)	.448* (.251)	.309** (.147)	.270* (.164)
District income	.000 (.000)	.000 (.000)	.000 (.000)	.000 (.000)	.000 (.000)	.000 (.000)
District education level	-.016 (.052)	-.007 (.072)	-.004 (.066)	-.035 (.101)	.138 (.144)	.182 (.209)
% African-American in district	.020 (.017)	-.046 (.056)	.034* (.020)	-.023 (.040)	-.165 (.170)	-.245 (.276)
Urban district	-.304 (.832)	-.612 (1.298)	-.516 (1.077)	-1.024 (1.668)	-1.847 (2.861)	-19.501 (5394.259)
Rural district	-.365 (.875)	-.860 (1.055)	.654 (1.362)	-14.958 (6269.622)	3.016* (1.716)	3.899 (2.382)
Constant	-3.381** (1.677)	-5.391** (2.146)	-3.703* (2.004)	-8.493* (4.764)	-11.45** (4.982)	-11.029** (5.498)
N	96	96	96	96	96	96
Model chi	22.831***	19.162**	24.759***	2.188**	18.573**	15.436*
-2 LL	89.314	6.597	51.379	19.096	31.561	23.848
Percent correct	78.1	87.5	88.5	94.8	92.7	95.8

NOTE: The data for district type variables (district income, district education level, %African-American in district, urban district, rural district) are taken from *The Almanac of State Legislatures* (Lilley, DeFranco, and Bernstein, 1998). Numbers in parentheses are standard errors. Given the small number of bills related to pornography, the model would not converge.

* $p \leq 0.1$

** $p \leq 0.05$

*** $p \leq 0.01$

Sponsorship of feminist bills

No significant relationship could be found between the newcomer status of the legislator and sponsorship of any type of feminist bills (which includes increasing reproductive rights and sex crimes). Focusing on the feminist bills column of *Table 6*, I

observe that there is also no significant relationship between sponsorship of one or more feminist bills and party. However, a highly significant relationship at the $p \leq 0.01$ level exists between sponsorship and being a male legislator. It is not a surprise that gender and the introduction of feminist legislation are correlated, as Swers (2002) found. The coefficient for this variable, where male = 1, is negative. This means that when all other variables remain constant, men are less likely to sponsor a feminist bill than women. As expected, men are also significantly less likely to sponsor a feminist bill beyond the topic of sex crimes, as well as a feminist bill increasing reproductive rights. However, no significant relationship is found between gender and bills regarding sex crimes. This justifies my proposal that sex crime bills, although feminist, are sponsored by a different type of legislator than other feminist bills.

Continuing down the Feminist column of *Table 6*, we can note that there is a significant relationship (at the $p \leq 0.05$ level) between sponsorship of feminist bills and the total number of bills sponsored. In fact, a significant relationship exists between sponsorship of several bill types and total bills sponsored. This is to be expected: legislators who sponsor more bills are more likely to sponsor more bills of a certain type.

The next five rows in this column describe the district level data. For sponsorship of feminist bills, no significant relationships are found with any of these variables and sponsorship of feminist bills. The last five rows in the table show the constant, the number of cases (legislators), model chi coefficient, the -2 log likelihood, and the percentage correctly predicted, respectively.

Table 6 shows that newcomers are neither more likely nor less likely to sponsor one or more feminist bills, when other variables remain constant. This includes all types of feminist bills, even when narrowed down to sex crimes or increasing reproductive rights.

Sponsorship of anti-feminist bills

According to the logistic regression model (see *Table 6*), a significant positive relationship exists between sponsorship of one or more anti-feminist bills and newcomer status, suggesting that when all other variables remain constant, newcomers are more likely to introduce one or more anti-feminist bills than old-timers. This relationship is consistent with my hypothesis. This suggests that the “new breed” of legislators allowed in by term limits are more likely to introduce a piece of legislation hostile to feminist issues than more experienced lawmakers.

When only those bills that restrict reproductive rights are examined, the significant relationship with newcomer status still exists and is further confirmed by my hypothesis and rejecting the null hypothesis. The only other indicator of anti-feminist bill sponsorship (with the exception of total bills sponsored) is if the legislator is from a rural district. This is to be expected, because rural districts are known to be more conservative than urban districts.

I use the logistic regression coefficients from *Table 6*, column 5 to calculate the probability that a hypothetical Republican old-timer would sponsor at least one anti-feminist bill compared to the probability that a hypothetical Republican newcomer would sponsor at least one anti-feminist bill. I use the mean values of the other control variables to calculate the predicted probabilities. The hypothetical Republican old-timer, all other characteristics being average, has a 6.63E-05 probability of introducing at least one anti-feminist bill,

whereas the same legislator, were he or she a newcomer, has a 0.004 probability of introducing one or more anti-feminist bills. This difference, although negligible, is consistent with the direction of my hypothesis, that newcomers are more likely than old-timers to sponsor an anti-feminist bill¹⁴.

Co-sponsorship

Table 7 presents the logistic regression coefficients for co-sponsorship of each bill type. The only significant relationship of interest to my hypothesis is between newcomers and the co-sponsorship of bills limiting reproductive rights. Consistent with sponsorship, newcomers are more likely to co-sponsor at least one of this bill type. Again, these findings are consistent with my hypothesis that newcomers are more likely to support anti-feminist issues.

¹⁴ These predicted probabilities are small due to the hypothetical cases I selected.

Table 7 Logits on Co-Sponsorship of Bills

Variable	<i>Feminist</i>	<i>Sex crimes</i>	<i>Feminist excluding sex crimes</i>	<i>Increasing reproductive rights</i>	<i>Anti-feminist</i>	<i>Limiting reproductive rights</i>	<i>Pornography</i>
Newcomer	3.242 (3.621)	.148 (1.032)	-1.780 (1.567)	.093 (.515)	.673 (.648)	.939* (.563)	.069 (.498)
Republican	-1.167 (2.721)	.012 (1.471)	-.882 (2.212)	-1.017 (.656)	2.410*** (.723)	.966 (.637)	.655 (.678)
Male	-18.344 (6556.811)	1.324 (1.628)	3.156 (2.350)	-.598 (.614)	.449 (.777)	-.820 (.757)	-1.231* (.741)
Total bills co-sponsored	.040* (.023)	.048*** (.016)	.076 (.027)	.014*** (.005)	.002 (.006)	.002 (.005)	.015*** (.005)
District income	.000 (.000)	.000** (.000)	.000 (.000)	.000 (.000)	.000 (.000)	.000 (.000)	.000 (.000)
District education level	-.029 (.220)	-.189 (.123)	.039 (.146)	-.008 (.046)	.098 (.064)	.000 (.052)	.011 (.048)
% African-American in district	.133 (.112)	.042 (.038)	.006 (.040)	.018 (.017)	-.007 (.021)	-.025 (.024)	-.013 (.018)
Urban district	-3.494 (4.291)	2.104 (1.754)	4.154 (2.922)	1.327* (.763)	-1.628* (.896)	-3.378*** (.878)	-.869 (.803)
Rural district	3.371 (3.145)	2.699 (1.791)	1.847 (2.216)	.009 (.764)	1.002 (.905)	.100 (.724)	.052 (.775)
Constant	9.121 (6556.816)	-11.163** (4.902)	-12.008* (6.562)	-4.445** (1.840)	-1.655 (2.085)	-.788 (1.800)	.419 (1.812)
N	97	97	97	97	97	97	97
Model chi	12.417	23.864***	34.184	29.810	54.065***	39.580***	22.052***
-2 LL	14.346	36.069	25.748	99.155	72.790	94.633	103.614
Percent correct	99.000	91.800	94.8	80.400	82.500	78.400	76.300

NOTE: The data for district type variables (district income, district education level, %African-American in district, urban district, rural district) are taken from *The Almanac of State Legislatures* (Lilley, DeFranco, and Bernstein, 1998). Numbers in parentheses are standard errors.

* $p \leq 0.1$

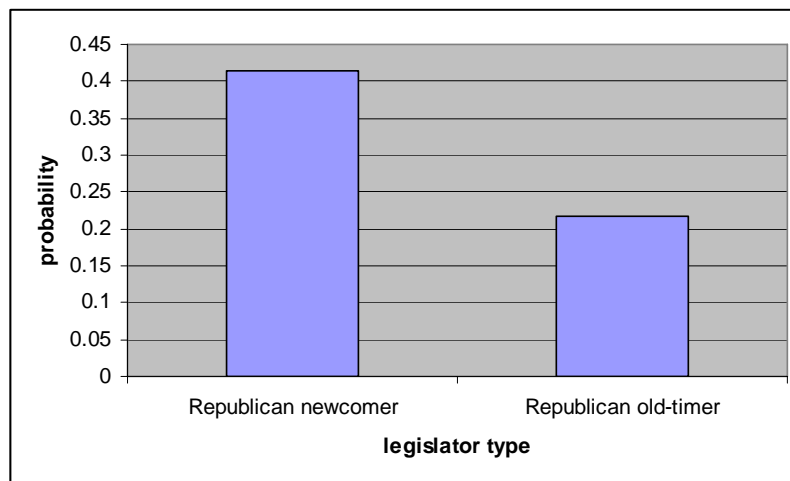
** $p \leq 0.05$

*** $p \leq 0.01$

I use the coefficients in the model to determine if there is a substantive difference in probability of a newcomer co-sponsoring anti-feminist legislation and an old-timer co-sponsoring anti-feminist legislation. This is done in a similar fashion as I did in the bill sponsorship section, except that the dependent variable is the anti-feminist bill subcategory of limiting reproductive rights rather than all anti-feminist bills. Swers explains that

“predicted probabilities allow one to determine how likely it is that an event will occur given certain conditions” (2002, p. 50). The hypothetical conditions I use in this analysis are a legislator who is Republican and possesses the mean of all other variables in my dataset (gender, total bills co-sponsored, district income, district education level, percentage of African-Americans in the district, and whether the district is urban or rural). *Figure 2* displays these probabilities when this hypothetical legislator is a newcomer and an old-timer.

Figure 2 Probability of co-sponsoring one or more anti-feminist bills



NOTE: The bars represent the mean probability that a legislator with a given old-timer status and party will co-sponsor at least one anti-feminist bill. To characterize legislators as hypothetical Republican newcomers or old-timers, the mean of all other independent variables are used.

According to my calculations, a Republican newcomer with average characteristics has a probability of 0.414 to co-sponsor at least one bill limiting reproductive rights, whereas a Republican old-timer with average characteristics has a probability of 0.216 to co-sponsor one or more bills limiting reproductive rights. *Figure 2* demonstrates that Republican all else equal, Republican newcomers are almost twice as likely as Republican old-timers to co-sponsor an anti-feminist bill.

Further analysis is needed to determine how these findings are related to my hypothesis. It would be helpful, in the case of co-sponsorship, to look at proportions rather than just a binary variable. Therefore I use linear regression to predict if anti-feminist bills are a significant share of bills co-sponsored by newcomers.

Table 8 reveals the coefficients of linear regression analyses on the co-sponsorship of each bill type. Consistent with the logits, the significant relationships observed in the linear regression are in the direction that is to be expected. For example, *Table 8* shows that Republicans are significantly more likely than Democrats to co-sponsor anti-feminist bills in general and bills limiting reproductive rights specifically. However, feminist bills excluding sex crimes constitute a smaller share of co-sponsorships among Republicans than Democrats. The model also predicts that legislators with a larger percentage of African-Americans in their districts will co-sponsor a larger proportion of feminist bills.

Table 8 Linear Regression coefficients for Co-Sponsorship of Bills

Variable	<i>Feminist</i>	<i>Sex crimes</i>	<i>Feminist excluding sex crimes</i>	<i>Increasing reproductive rights</i>	<i>Anti-feminist</i>	<i>Limiting reproductive rights</i>	<i>Porno-graphy</i>
Newcomer	-.158* (.005)	-.001 (.004)	-.187** (.003)	.008 (.001)	.071 (.004)	.121 (.003)	-.046 (.001)
Republican	-.142 (.006)	.108 (.005)	-.266** (.004)	-.187 (.002)	.370*** (.005)	.224* (.004)	.127 (.002)
Male	-.101 (.006)	.026 (.005)	-.144 (.004)	-.121 (.002)	.073 (.005)	.060 (.004)	-.210* (.002)
District income	.115 (.000)	.235 (.000)	-.077 (.000)	-.032 (.000)	-.244 (.000)	-.193 (.000)	-.292 (.000)
District education level	.087 (.000)	-.002 (.000)	.105 (.000)	.126 (.000)	.140 (.000)	.122 (.000)	.207 (.000)
% African-American in district	.272** (.000)	-.032 (.000)	.351*** (.000)	.186 (.000)	-.061 (.000)	-.099 (.000)	-.088 (.000)
Urban district	.190 (.007)	.169 (.006)	.072 (.005)	.030 (.002)	-.175 (.006)	-.198 (.005)	-.124 (.002)
Rural district	-.051 (.007)	-.082 (.006)	.014 (.005)	-.008 (.002)	.064 (.006)	.023 (.004)	.000 (.002)
Constant	-.024** (.092)	-.010 (.042)	-.193** (.083)	-.042* (.023)	-.035 (.033)	-.030 (.032)	.006 (.013)
N	97	97	97	97	97	97	97
R square	.282	.090	.406	.149	.262	.184	.080

NOTE: The data for district type variables (district income, district education level, %African-American in district, urban district, rural district) are taken from *The Almanac of State Legislatures* (Lilley, DeFranco, and Bernstein, 1998). Numbers in parentheses are standard errors.

* $p \leq 0.1$

** $p \leq 0.05$

*** $p \leq 0.01$

The relationships revealed in the linear models are consistent with my hypothesis.

Newcomers co-sponsor a significantly greater proportion of feminist bills than their old-timer counterparts. It does not necessarily follow that the newcomers are more ideologically extreme with regards to anti-feminist issues, but it does signal that newcomers view feminist issues as a smaller portion of their legislative agendas.

In summary, analysis of the sponsorship of bills indicates that newcomers are significantly more likely to introduce one or more pieces of anti-feminist legislation

(including bills limiting reproductive rights). Analysis of the co-sponsorship of bills reveals a similar pattern. Newcomers are more likely to co-sponsor any anti-feminist legislation, and a smaller proportion of their co-sponsorships are feminist bills. Because newcomers display significantly different behaviors than old-timers, I conclude that the null hypothesis can be rejected.

Discussion

My research demonstrates that, all else equal, a difference exists in the feminist ideology of legislators first entering the Ohio legislature before the implementation of term limits and those first entering after term limits are implemented. I argue that term limits have opened the door to a new type of legislator who is more hostile to the feminist agenda.

An alternative explanation of my findings is that the public has become more conservative, and this “new breed” of legislators is a result of a change in public opinion rather than term limits. I therefore look at public opinion data on ideology of that decade. *Table 9* reveals the results of three similar polls taken of Ohioans. The percentage of people identifying themselves as liberals declined, moderates increased, and conservatives went up then back down again. From this data, no strong link can be made between public opinion and the election of more conservative legislators. Sponsorship and co-sponsorship by newcomers do not seem to be driven by public opinion.

Table 9 Ideology of Ohio's General Public

year	conservative	moderate	liberal	no opinion
1991	31	39	22	7
1996	40	41	14	3
2000	34	46	13	7

NOTE: Year 1991 is the University of Akron Survey. The question is, "Now when you think about political issues would you say that you think of yourself as a liberal, moderate, or a conservative?" Year 1996 is the Columbus Dispatch/ WBNS-TV/ Gallup Poll. The question is, "How would you describe your political views? Are they very conservative, conservative, moderate, or liberal?" Very conservative and conservative are added together in the same column. Year 2000 is the Portrait of America Survey. The question is, "In political terms, do you consider yourself to be very conservative, somewhat conservative, moderate, somewhat liberal, or very liberal?" Very conservative and somewhat conservative are added together; somewhat liberal and very liberal are added together. Data is taken from *Polling the Nations* (<http://poll.orspub.com>).

The percentage of people identifying themselves as liberal decreased throughout the decade, but the increase in self-identification went to moderate as opposed to conservative. However, *Table 9* should be viewed with some hesitation because the polls use slightly different question wordings.

Despite the opinion of the public, moderates in the Ohio General Assembly are rarer than in previous sessions, as anecdotal evidence suggests that newcomers are "moving to the right" (Gottlieb 2001). In 2001 Laura Bischoff of the *Dayton Daily News* noted that the "Ohio General Assembly's so-called 'Caveman Caucus'—a term once used for a handful of conservative House members—would need a bigger meeting room with more chairs." Bischoff points to examples of the trend toward conservatism, including bill proposals that allow pharmacists to refuse to dispense birth control and give state agencies more control over abortion clinics. Further evidence that the Republican majority in Ohio has become more conservative is that its major supporters are ultra-conservative groups such as the National Rifle Association, Right to Life, Family First, and the Christian Coalition. Since

this rightward trend in the General Assembly cannot be explained by public opinion, I argue that it is explained by the implementation of term limits.

Implications

My findings have implications for those on both sides of feminist issues, constituents, and for the term limits debate. For feminists in Ohio, my observations could be considered a call to action. Feminists need to be aware that there are lawmakers in the General Assembly that are a threat to their agenda. Knowing this, they can lobby other lawmakers who may be supportive to counteract the effect this potentially powerful “new breed” of legislators may have on policy. My results also show that term limits have not yet created a breed of legislators who are allied with the feminist cause. Term limits have opened a space for a new kind of legislator, and feminists should take advantage of this opportunity in open seat elections.

Anti-choice advocates and others who are against feminist causes may be encouraged by my findings. I have shown that term limits create a space for candidates running on hot-button issues such as reproductive rights. Anti-choice activists can take advantage of this to support the “new breed” of legislators when they run for election. They know that in eight years, they can try to replace an experienced, feminist legislator with a naïve, zealous politician-to-be whose interests lie in ending abortion as opposed to more mundane issues. However, anti-feminists should keep in mind that term limits may not always be to their benefit. I have identified a trend that new legislators are more likely to introduce anti-feminist bills, but this trend could change with the second generation of newcomers.

For constituents, the implications of my findings vary depending on ideology. Either way, voters should know that term limits do make a difference in the policy preferences of their lawmakers, which could impact policy in the long run. As for the term limits debate, this research answers some questions, but raises even more. For example, does this trend exist in other term-limited states? Carey et al. (2003) found no national effect of term limits on legislator ideology. But perhaps individual states have unique differences. Other questions this research raises include: what other policy preferences do newcomers and old-timers differ on, if any? What will happen when *all* legislators are newcomers?

Suggestions for further research

I welcome other researchers to expand on my analysis by looking at Ohio's 125th General Assembly and, in the future, the 126th. Another way to expand my analysis is to use the same methods on other states, with similar characteristics, and compare the findings with Ohio. This would determine if my observations are unique to Ohio or are indicative of a more national trend. To make a good comparison, the other state or states would need to have a similar legislature structure with regard to professionalization, procedure, demographics, and term limits. The state as a whole would also have to have similarities with Ohio in geographical region, economic sectors, and economic and political conditions. It would also be interesting to see the results of a similar analysis of different types of bills. Do newcomers differ from old-timers in other ways? For example, one could hypothesize that newcomers are more or less likely to propose social welfare bills.

Roll call votes are another way to measure a legislator's position on certain issues, although they are not good signals of a lawmaker's priorities. Roll calls could be used to determine if systematic differences exist between the two types of legislators. This could

also be taken a step further by looking at bills that are actually passed. One could determine if there is a difference between the types of bills passed before and after the implementation of term limits.

Conclusion

I set out to investigate whether term limits in Ohio have allowed more conservative legislators into office. The evidence shows that this is the case for feminist issues, at least for the 124th General Assembly. The behavior of newcomers differs from old-timers in that they are more likely to introduce and co-sponsor at least one anti-feminist bill. Their co-sponsorships also consist of a smaller share of feminist bills. Although further research needs to be done to examine the long term effects, my analysis complicates the term-limit debate for opponents and proponents.

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